

June 19, 1959

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MEMORANDUM OF CONFERENCE WITH THE PRESIDENT
June 18, 1959

Others present:

Secretary Dillon
General Goodpaster



Secretary Dillon showed the President a message from Mr. Herter indicating that he found little basis for hope for fruitful negotiations in the Khrushchev reply. The President recalled he had merely said that the tone was conciliatory. Mr. Dillon added that Mr. Herter had commented that he thought it was probably best for the President not to reply to Khrushchev at once, since doing so would tend to shift the locus of negotiation from Geneva to the exchange of correspondence. The President agreed.


The President said that any fixed period at the end of which our rights in Berlin would lapse is unsatisfactory since it really constitutes an ultimatum. He said we could only consider a limit on our rights in Berlin if it were tied to some other development. In the meantime, we insist upon the right to protect the West Berliners in their right to freedom. He repeated that any period must be determined by events, such events not to violate the safety and rights of the West Berliners.

Mr. Dillon and the President resumed their discussion after the NSC meeting. Mr. Dillon said that Mr. Herter had telephoned indicating that the Western Foreign Ministers were agreed that, unless Gromyko comes up with some substantial new proposal, the conference should be recessed for one month. The President agreed. Mr. Dillon thought that if such a recess occurs, Mr. Herter should make a public report to the nation on his return.

Mr. Dillon asked if he might send a copy of Khrushchev's reply to the President to the same Ambassadors who received a copy of his outgoing message. The President indicated he did not wish to do this. He said he was sending a "package" to Macmillan, to be seen by no one but himself. Even the fact that this correspondence

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exists is to be communicated only to those who have great necessity to know about it. After further consideration the President said the gist of Khrushchev's reply could be given to the Ambassadors, but they are to acknowledge to no one that there has been such an exchange of correspondence. He asked Mr. Dillon to stress this to the people in the State Department who know of this and also to our delegation at Geneva.


A. J. Goodpaster
Brigadier General, USA

